

Message Text

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12

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

AID-05 SCCT-01 IO-10 /074 W
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R 171100Z OCT 75

FM AMCONSUL KARACHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9274
INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY ISLAMBAD
AMCONSUL LAHORE
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KARACHI 2274

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINS, PK

SUBJECT: SEASONAL INCREASE IN BALUCHISTAN DISSIDENT ACTIVITY

REF: A) ISLAMABAD 9249; B) ISLAMABAD 9321 (NOTAL); C) ISLAMABAD 9381
(NOTAL)

SUMMARY: FRAGMENTARY NON-OFFICIAL INFORMATION AVAILABLE IN KARACHI
TENDS TO CONFIRM OUTLINES, IF NOT DETAILS, OF REUTERS REPORTS
(REF A) OF LATE SUMMER RISE IN BALUCHISTAN DISSIDENT ACTIVITY.
INCIDENTS HAVE OCCURRED IN PATHAN AREAS NEARER AFGHAN BORDER AS WELL
AS IN LONG-DISTURBED MARRI AND MENGAL (BALUCHI) TRIBAL STRONGHOLDS.
QUETTA HAS REMAINED UNAFFECTED. SEVERAL PLAUSIBLE EXPLANATIONS
FOR RENEWED ACTIVITY, DRAWING ON LOCAL CONDITIONS, DEVELOPMENTS
ELSEWHERE IN PAKISTAN, AND ENCOURAGEMENT FROM FURTHER AFIELD,
HAVE BEEN ADVANCED. NONETHELESS, PRESENT LEVEL OF ARMED DISSIDENCE
APPEARS LOWER THAN THAT REPORTED IN MID-1974 AND HAS APPARENTLY
NOT SERIOUSLY AFFECTED CIVIL ADMINISTRATION. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESS REPORTS OF SEPTEMBER 12 DISSIDENT RAID ON
TRAIN NEAR SIBI AND REUTERS STORIES (REFA) NOT PUBLISHED
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HERE HAVE REFOCUSSED LOCAL INTEREST IN LONG-QUIESCENT

BALUCHISTAN SITUATION. FRAGMENTARY INFORMATION GLEANED FROM USUALLY KNOWLEDGEABLE SOURCES TENDS TO CONFIRM SUBSTANCE, IF NOT DETAILS OF REUTERS STORIES. INFORMANTS ESTIMATE SEVERAL INCIDENTS OCCUR FOR EACH ONE OF WHICH RUMORS REACH QUETTA OR KARACHI. SOME SAY MARRI TRIBESMEN LOYAL TO INCARCERATED NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY (NAP) LEADER KHAIR BAKHSH MARRI, WHO OPERATE IN DESOLATE HILLS NORTH OF AMERICAN OIL DRILLING SITES, HAVE GIVEN ARMY BRIGADE REPORTEDLY STATIONED THERE MOST TROUBLE. OTHERS ARGUE THAT PROUD YOUNG BROHI/BALUCH DISSIDENTS LIKE ASLAM GICHKI AND SULEMAN BALUCH, OPERATING IN MENGAL TRIBAL AREAS OF JHALAWAN DISTRICT, HAVE BEEN MOST ACTIVE. QUETTA-BASED AMERICAN SOURCES ALSO MENTIONED RAID ON TRAIN STATION IN MUSLIMBAGH (FORMERLY HINDUBAGH) AND KILLING OF TWO ARMY MAJORS IN PISHIN BAZAAR INDICATING THAT SOME HERETOFORE INACTIVE PATHANS HAVE APPARENTLY DECIDED TO VENT THEIR GRIEVANCES AGAINST THE PRESENT REGIME IN TRADITIONALLY DIRECT FASHION.

2. DESPITE THESE REPORTS, SECURITY PRECAUTIONS IN QUETTA ARE REPORTEDLY EVEN LESS VISIBLE AND ONEROUS THAN PREVIOUSLY. THERE ARE NO INDICATIONS THAT THE AUTHORITIES ARE WARNING TRAVELLERS AGAINST USE OF ROADS FROM QUETTA TO CHAMAN BORDER, ZIARAT, NUSHKI OR KALAT. TRAINS ARE RUNNING REGULARLY. THERE HAVE BEEN NO REPORTS THAT SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS HAVE BEEN HALTED IN REMOTE AREAS. AS HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE CASE IN BALUCHISTAN, PRUDENT MOTORISTS TRAVEL ARMED AND DURING THE DAY.

3. KARACHI OBSERVERS WERE QUICK TO PLACE REPORTED INCIDENTS IN LONGER-TERM AND LARGER PERSPECTIVE. BANDITRY IS ENDEMIC IN BALUCHISTAN, ESPECIALLY IN DIRT-POOR TRIBAL HILL AREAS, AND USUALLY INCREASES DURING SUMMER WHEN ITINERANT TRIBAL PEASANTS RETURN TO HIGHLANDS AND TRAFFIC PICKS UP. DISSIDENT ACTIVITIES, OFTEN DIFFICULT TO DISTINGUISH FROM SIMPLE BANDITRY, ARE ALSO FACILITATED BY WARMER WEATHER. THE AUGUST/SEPTEMBER FLASH FLOODS, DISRUPTING ROAD AND RAIL TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS, CREATED CONDITIONS WHICH FAVORED BANDITS AND DISSIDENTS AND IMPEDED CIVIL, POLICE, PARAMILITARY, AND ARMY ACTIVITY, ACCORDING TO OUR CONTACTS.

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4. ALTHOUGH ONLY THE YOUNGER TRIBAL ELEMENTS CAN BE CONSIDERED "POLITICIZED" IN ANY MODERN SENSE, POLITICAL CONDITIONS FOSTERED AND SUSTAIN DISSIDENT ACTIVITY, SAY KARACHI SOURCES. THE CIVIL ADMINISTRATION AND, TO A GREATER EXTENT, THE SECURITY FORCES ARE DRAWN ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY FROM PUNJAB. THE BALUCHISTAN CABINET BOASTS NO "TRUE BALUCHI" AND ONLY TWO DISCREDITED PATHAN DIVINES, ACCORDING TO YOUNGER TRIBAL NOTABLES.

CORRUPTION AND INCOMPETENCE EXHIBITED BY PROVINCIAL MINISTERS HAVE BECOME PAINFULLY BLATANT AND BRAZEN, THEY ASSERT. DEVELOPMENTS ELSEWHERE IN PAKISTAN-- THE INTERMINABLE IMPRISONMENT WITHOUT TRIAL OF THE BALUCHISTAN NAP LEADERS, THE OVER-PUBLICIZED AND QUESTIONABLE EVIDENCE PRESENTED IN COURT TO JUSTIFY THE BANNING OF THE NAP AS ANTI-NATIONAL, AND THE PENDING CRIMINAL TRIALS OF WALI KHAN ALONG WITH SOME 70 LESSER BALUCHISTAN NAP LEADERS -- MAY WELL HAVE ENCOURAGED THE LESS EXPERIENCED AND MORE RADICAL NAP SYMPATHIZERS TO AGAIN MAKE THEIR PRESENCE AND RESENTMENT FELT.

5. INSURGENT ACTIVITY, STILL LARGELY CONFINED TO TWO REMOTE AND SPARSELY-POPULATED TRIBAL AREAS, HAS NOT APPARENTLY ADVERSELY AFFECTED CIVIL ADMINISTRATION IN MOST OF THE PROVINCE, AS MENTIONED IN PARA 2. WHETHER THE PRESENT LEVEL OF DISSIDENCE---STILL APPARENTLY WELL BELOW THAT OF 1973-74--- CAN BE SUSTAINED WOULD SEEM TO DEPEND PRIMARILY ON THE TRIBAL REACTION TO CONTINUING GOP EFFORTS TO HARRASS AND DISCREDIT NAP LEADERS, THEIR ASSESSMENT OF THE STRENGTH OF THE BHUTTO REGIME (NOW UNDER MUCH MORE SERIOUS CHALLENGE IN PUNJAB), AND THE AMOUNT AND KINDS OF ASSISTANCE RECEIVED FROM AFGHANISTAN. UNLESS THE ARMY WERE TO ASSUME AN ARROGANT, MUCH MORE AGGRESSIVE STANCE OR BHUTTO'S HOLD ON PAKISTAN WERE TO WEAKEN NOTICEABLY--- BOTH UNLIKELY EVENTS WHICH WOULD ENGENDER MORE ACTIVE DISAFFECTION AMONG TRIBAL ELEMENTS AS YET NEUTRAL OR PRO-GOVERNMENT---THE PRESENT SITUATION IN BALUCHISTAN SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE MANAGEABLE BY THE POLITICAL-MILITARY STRATEGY THE GOP EFFECTED LAST YEAR. CONGEN OFFICERS PLANNING TO VISIT QUETTA THIS MONTH AND NEXT SHOULD RETURN WITH A MORE DETAILED APPRECIATION OF CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN PAKISTAN'S LARGEST BUT LEAST CONFIDENTIAL

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POPULATED PROVINCE.
MOORE

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NNN

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